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EXTRAORDINARY

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GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB

DIRECTOR INFORMATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS

ADVERTISEMENT POLICY 2026

(PRINT MEDIA)

The 16th January, 2026

No.PR I/1294777/2026.-

1. **OBJECTIVE:-** The objective of this policy is to secure the widest possible coverage of the intended content or message through **Print Media via advertisements.**

2. **NODAL AGENCY:-** The Department of Information and Public Relations is the nodal agency of the Government of Punjab for all kinds of advertising by all Departments and Agencies of Government of Punjab, including Public Sector Undertakings and Autonomous Bodies such as Boards and Corporations, Local and Urban Bodies, Universities, various Commissions, Authorities, Societies constituted by Government Departments, Trusts under the Government, Companies, Apex Cooperative Institutions and other State Government Institutions and Organizations etc.(hereafter defined as Agency of Government). The nodal agency will work as the Single Window for dealing with the media as per this policy.

3. **RELEASE OF ADVERTISEMENT TO PRINT MEDIA THROUGH DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS:-** All the advertisements in Print media shall be routed through the Department of Information and Public Relations, which shall be Nodal Agency for issuing advertisements. It shall be mandatory for all the Departments of Government of Punjab, Boards, Corporations, Local Bodies, Universities, Commissions and such other authorities/organizations and institutions etc. to issue all advertisements through the Nodal Agency.

   The Media plan for client departments shall be prepared by the Department of Information and Public Relations and the Department of Information and Public Relations shall be the final authority to decide media through which the advertisements are to be released.

4. The payment of bills shall continue to be done by the client department as is the practice prevailing currently.

5. **TRADE DISCOUNT:-** Trade discount @15% shall be available to Punmedia and other departments on all category advertisements released to print media.

6. **OBJECTIVES OF ADVERTISING:**

   - **Coverage:** The primary objective of the Government in advertising is to secure the widest possible

coverage of the intended content or message through Print Media.

- **Not to take into account political affiliation or editorial policies:** In releasing advertisements to newspapers/publications, the Director not to take into account the political affiliation or editorial policies of newspapers/publications. However, the Director will not release advertisements to any newspaper/publication which incites or tends to incite communal passion, preaches violence, offends the sovereignty and integrity of India or violates the socially accepted norms of public decency and behaviour.

7. DEFINITIONS:

a) **Director:** Means the Director, Information and Public Relations, Punjab and includes any officer of the Directorate of Information and Public Relations authorised to function on behalf of the Director.

b) **Government:** Means the Government of Punjab, in the Department of Information & Public Relations.

c) **Policy:** Means the Advertisement Policy for Print Media-2026 of the Government of Punjab.

d) **Advertisement:** Means an advertisement issued by any Government Department or Agency of Government in Print Media.

e) **Agency or Government Agency:** Includes Public Sector Undertakings such as a Board or Corporation, Urban & Rural Local Body, University, Commission, Authority, Society constituted by Government of Punjab, Trust, Institution or Organisation, Apex Cooperative Institution under the Government of Punjab and any other State Government Body etc.

f) **Newspaper:** Means a publication that circulates news and comments on current affairs and is published every day.

g) **Publication:** Includes any newspaper, periodical, book etc.

h) **Periodical:** Includes a regularly published magazine, journal or paper at a fixed periodicity such as weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or annually.

i) **Client:** Any Government Department/Agency that sends a requisition for an advertisement to Director, in terms of this policy or any Government Department/Agency that issues or seeks to issue an advertisement.

j) **Requisition:** A written request/proposal by client to Director for release of advertisement or design of media plan/campaign.

8. POLICY GUIDELINES: Government will advertise its plans, programmes and activities in such a manner as it may deem appropriate. The Guidelines relating to Print Media are mentioned below. However, in view of the dynamism involved in the subject, in cases where it is found essential to make some deviation from the laid guidelines, the Director shall prepare a case with reasons and take approval of the Government.

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR PRINT MEDIA

1. CATEGORY 1 ADVERTISEMENT:

Includes the following, namely:

(i) Situation Vacant, Admission Notice

(ii) Tender Notice, Indicative advertisement

(iii) Auction Notice-Classified (Only)

(iv) Statutory Notice, Public Notice, miscellaneous Announcement

2. CATEGORY 2 ADVERTISEMENT: Advertisement which has conspicuous display of content and is published in the newspaper/periodicals and includes the following:

(i) Mass Campaign

(ii) Event Highlight

(iii) Major Policies, Programmes and Schemes

(iv) Socio-Economic concerns

(v) Auction Notice-Display (Only)

(vi) Product Sales Promotion

3. **COMMERCIAL RATE:** May be determined by the DPR from time to time or case to case being neither a BOC rate nor DPR rate.

4. **BOC RATES:**

DAVP is currently known as 'Bureau of Outreach and Communication' (BOC) through integration of erstwhile DAVP (Directorate of Audio Visual Publicity), Directorate of Field Publicity (DFP) and Song & Drama Division (S&DD) by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

5. **DPR RATES:**

Means rates approved by the Department of Information and Public Relations, Punjab for publications.

6. **EMPANELMENT:**

Government shall maintain a list of newspapers, periodicals and other publications approved for release of advertisements by empanelling or registering such newspapers, journals and other publications. The Director will empanel only such newspapers, journals and other publications as are required for achieving the objectives of this policy with consideration to the circulation and readership from different sections of society in different parts of the state and also, in specified cases their readership in different parts of the country. However, BOC empanelled newspapers/publications, whether empanelled with DPR or not, can be issued advertisements from time to time.

7. **PAYMENT OF ADVERTISEMENT BILLS:**

The liability for making payment of advertisement bills is with the client Department/Agency of government on whose behalf, either on their request or as decided by Government, the advertisement has been released by the Director. All Departments/Agencies of government should pay for all type of advertisements within 60 days of issuance of advertisement/submission of the advertisement bills. The Director will intimate all Departments/Agencies of government regarding release of advertisements along with the media plan decided by Director. Any dispute regarding payment would be decided by the Director and the decision would be binding on the Department/Agency and Publication.

8. **PRIORITIZATION OF NEWSPAPERS/PERIODICALS FOR EMPANELMENT:**

In pursuance of broad social objectives of advertising by Government and for ensuring fairness among various categories of Newspapers/Periodicals, the Government will consider empanelment of Newspapers/ Periodicals belonging to the following categories on priority basis, apart from other newspapers with large circulation:

a) Small and medium newspapers/periodicals.

b) Language newspapers and other publications.

c) Newspapers/periodicals and other publications published in Punjab and other states.

9. **CLASSIFICATION OF NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS:**

Newspapers/Publications are classified into three categories, namely:-

(i) Small, with a circulation of up to 25,000 copies per Published edition.

(ii) Medium, between 25,001 and 75,000 copies per published edition.

(iii) Big, with a circulation of above 75,000 copies per published edition.

10. CRITERIA FOR NEWSPAPER EMPANELMENT AND EMPANELMENT SCHEDULE:

All newspapers/periodicals seeking empanelment should comply with the following:

l) Provisions of the Press & Registration of Books Act, 1867.

ll) Uninterrupted and regular publication for a period of six months.

lll) Advertisement issuing authority will ensure proper release of advertisements to various newspapers and periodicals in different languages. However, preference may be given to Punjabi Print Media

11. GUIDELINES FOR ISSUANCE OF ADVERTISEMENTS:

I) No advertisement shall be issued for any non-government organization such as social, cultural and sports organizations.

ll) No advertisement shall be issued for special supplements of newspapers and periodicals. However, in exceptional circumstances, the Government may relax this condition.

lll) The Department shall ensure that Advertisements are released to Periodicals and Newspapers in the following ratio:

(i) English - 20%

(ii) Indian Language - 80 % (*Preference will be given to Punjabi language)

IV) No photographs of any political leader not holding any govt. Office or of any officer shall appear in display Advertisements. The Photographs of National Heroes, Freedom Fighters who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of India or National Leaders like; Mahatama Gandhi, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev, S. Udam Singh etc. or any other prominent personality whose thoughts and teachings are related to the occasion and give inspiration to the masses will be used for display advertisements.

The judgements of the Supreme Court in this regard shall be followed in letter and spirit.

V) With a view to highlighting its major achievements/initiatives and various pro-people policies across the country, the Punjab Government can release its advertisements in the other regional languages newspapers of different states from time to time with an objective to percolate the desired message far and wide amongst the people of the country in the larger public interest.

12. REGISTRATION OF NEWSPAPERS/PERIODICALS FOR ADVERTISEMENTS:

For issuing advertisements on specific occasions, a list of newspapers may be drawn by the Director and such papers would be registered for selecting advertisements. Normally, advertisements are issued to empanelled newspapers, but on specific occasions, advertisements may be issued to newspapers which are not empanelled. Any names of the newspapers suggested by other Departments and Agencies will be considered by the Director who is the final authority in selecting the Newspapers/Periodicals for registration.

13. PROVISIONAL EMPANELMENT:

The Director may grant provisional empanelment to a newspaper for a period of six months if the newspaper is otherwise found suitable for issuance of Government advertisements. The rate payable to such newspaper would be the BOC & DPR rates applicable. Depending upon the publicity impact, this period can be further extended.

14. DIPR RATES:

Where BOC rates of any empanelled newspapers/periodicals is unavailable, the DIPR shall determine the rates payable to such newspapers/periodicals, which will be valid for a particular circulation and a period

of one year or more which may be renewed/extended. However, a change in circulation category (whether increase or decrease) can affect the period of validity of the contract based on the evidence as prescribed in the criterion for empanelment or on the basis of CA/RNI/ABC/DPRO certificate, as applicable. The decision of DIPR in this regard will be final.

Note: All empanelled publications must submit a copy of annual return of circulation submitted to Registrar Newspapers of India with receiving proof from RNI for the previous year by 30th September every year, failing which the newspapers can be de-empanelled by the Director.

15. REGULARITY:

The applicant should have published the daily newspaper on at least 25 days of each month during preceding 12 months; weeklies should have published 46 issues during the preceding 12 months, fortnightlies 23 issues and monthlies 11 issues during the preceding 12 months, to be considered for empanelment.

16. MINIMUM CIRCULATION FOR EMPANELMENT:

A Newspaper/Periodical should have a minimum paid circulation of not less than 2500 copies for being considered eligible for empanelment.

17. AUTHENTICATION OF CIRCULATION:

The applicant Newspaper/Journal should furnish authenticated figures of circulation of ABC, RNI/Cost Accountant/Statutory Auditor/ Chartered Accountant as per requirement.

(i) RNI circulation certificate will be valid up to four years from the date of issue for this purpose.

(ii) A publication with circulation up to 25000 need not submit RNI/ABC certificate.

18. CHECKING OF CIRCULATION FIGURES: The Director reserves the right to have figures of circulation checked through its representative/agent or through RNI.

19. CONDITIONS FOR EMPANELMENT:

While selecting Newspapers/Journals, the Director will take into account the standard tone and contents. No advertisement shall be, released to Newspapers/Journals which, encourage fissiparous tendencies, fan communal hatred or present the accepted values of society in a distorted manner or harm national integration and communal harmony.

1. The newspaper should not have been disqualified in the last three years or should not be a defaulter of BOC or the Department of Information and Public Relations, Punjab.
2. The applicant should also furnish a copy of the Certificate of Registration issued by the RNI in the name of the publisher.
3. The details of the paper like size, language, periodicity, print area and details of printing press etc. as asked for in empanelment form may be given. Further, it must be substantiated that the paper being published is of a reasonable standard. Reasonable standard inter alia, means that:
    a. The Print matter and photographs should be legible, neat, clear and without smudges, overwriting and tampering.
    b. There should be no repetition of news items or articles in the newspapers/periodicals from the previous issues of the same newspaper.
    c. There should be no reproduction of news items or articles from other newspaper/journals and the source of news/articles should be mentioned.
    d. Masthead on its front page should carry the title of the newspaper, place, date and day of publication; it should also carry RNI Registration.

e. Number, volume & issue number, number of pages and price of newspapers/journal;

f. The newspaper should carry imprint line as required under Press & Registration of Books Act, l867.

g. Inner pages must carry page number, title of the paper and date of publication. For multi-editions, place of publication must be mentioned in inner pages also.

h. All the publications must carry an editorial.

4. The Publisher must ensure that the publication fulfils all the norms and guidelines laid down in this Policy before applying for empanelment. The application form must be complete in all respects with supporting documents.

5. The Newspapers already empanelled with BOC may apply to Department of Information and Public Relations, Punjab along with copies of BOC empanelment and rate contract. The rates applicable would be same as approved by BOC.

20. VALIDATION OF EMPANELMENT:

Empanelment granted by the Director, shall, remain valid for one year.

21. SUSPENSION AND RECOVERIES:

A newspaper/publication will be suspended from empanelment by the Director with immediate effect without any notice if:

1. It has submitted false information regarding circulation or otherwise;
2. It has discontinued its publication, changed its periodicity or its title or has become irregular or changed its premises/press without prior intimation;
3. It has failed to submit its "Annual Return" to the RNI or its "Annual Circulation Certificate" from the prescribed agencies by 30th Sept;
4. Its Editor/Manager/Owner convicted by Court of Law for activities related to the publication.
5. It refuses to accept and carry an advertisement issued by the Director on more than two occasions;
6. In case of any of the above mentioned irregularities, the publication shall remain suspended for a period up to 12 months. Resultantly, the Director may also affect recovery of any payment made to the publisher during the aforesaid period, which will have to be deposited by the erring publisher within 60 days from the date of Demand Letter issued by the Director, failing which the recovery will be realized from pending bills/payments with Government/Agencies. Such publication will remain debarred from empanelment till the recovery is made.

22. SUBMISSION OF ADVERTISEMENT BILLS:

Every publication will submit its advertisement bills, complete in all respect and supported with relevant documents, within 15 days of the publication of the advertisement to the Director, who will direct the client Department/Agency of government to make the payment within 30 days. Director will not be responsible for the payment of bills submitted after stipulated time, or for any delay in payment by the Government Department/Agency of government.

23. ADVERTISING RATE:

The Director will accept the rates approved by the BOC Government of India, for release of regular advertisements to any empanelled newspaper/journal or other publication. However, to ensure front page/ third page/last page placement advertisement of utmost importance, the DPR can pay a premium as per BOC Policy/Guidelines of the above BOC rates for front page/third page/last page only. The decision of Government in this regard will be final.

24. RELEASE OF ADVERTISEMENTS OF BOARDS, CORPORATIONS, PSUs AND OTHERS ON BOC RATES:

As per the Print Media Advertisement Policy of the Government of India-2020 effective from 1st August, 2020, all the Departments and Agencies of the Government of Punjab, including Public Sector Undertakings and Autonomous Bodies such as Boards and Corporations, Local and Urban Bodies, Universities, various Commissions, Development Authorities, Societies constituted by Government Departments, Trusts under the Government, Companies, Apex Cooperative Institutions and other State Government Institutions and Organizations etc. (hereafter defined as Agency of Government) will be bound to issue all advertisements through the Nodal Agency only at the BOC rates. However, the rates of advertisements by Maharatna and Navratna Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) will be 1.5 times the normal BOC rates. For advertisements of other PSUs, normal BOC rates will apply.

Note:

A publication may be suspended for releasing advertisement by the Nodal Agency (DIPR) with immediate effect for a period of twelve (12) months, if the publication refuses to accept and carry an advertisement issued by Nodal Agency on behalf of the departments of Punjab government and autonomous bodies viz. boards, corporations, local bodies, universities, commissions and other authorities/organizations and institutions etc. on more than three occasions. Provided that Nodal Agency (DIPR) shall not issue any order of suspension without giving a reasonable opportunity to the concerned publication in such case.

25. PUBLICATION OF ADVERTISEMENT:

- It shall be the responsibility of the publisher/newspaper to correctly translate the advertisement text before publication. In case of any doubt, the Director may be consulted, but for wrong/incorrect/ misleading information or translation, a deduction may be imposed by the Director. Such decision would be final.
- No Newspaper will publish advertisement released by the Director without receipt of the relevant Release Order.
- "If, for any reason, it is not possible to issue release orders to newspapers related to advertisements to be released late at night, a regularized release order will be issued later with the approval of the competent authority.
- If, in any case or pressing and extraordinary situation, it is not possible to obtain administrative approval from the competent authority before issuing an important advertisement, then the ex-post facto administrative approval will be obtained from the competent authority after the release of the advertisement."

26. RELEASE AND PAYMENT OF CLASSIFIED/INDICATIVE/DISPLAY ADVERTISEMENT:

a) Director will issue a Release Order through PAROS (Punjab Advertisement Release Order System) to the newspapers/Periodicals for the publication of advertisement. A copy of the Release Order will also be sent to the client Department. The R.O. shall contain all relevant information including the name of the Newspaper/Periodical to which the advertisement has been released, space, date of publication and advertisement rate.

b) The client department should make payment only after ensuring physical verification of actual advertisement size in the concerned publication strictly according to Release Order. However, DIPR will not carry out verification in any case rather it would be sole responsibility of the client department.

c) DIPR shall release time to time Indicative Advertisement as per instruction issued by the Finance

Department, which shall contain summary information of tender of various departments and shall also provide a link to the e-Tendering Website for detailed information. Any deviation to the rule shall be made only on the written request of the Administrative Secretary of the concerned department highlighting the special circumstances warranting the release of a separate Advertisement. Payments for such Indicative Advertisement shall be made by the DIPR for which a separate budgetary allocation shall be provided by the Finance Department. All the display Advertisements issued by various departments would be released as per standard sizes. However, the payment would be made to the newspaper/agencies in accordance with the actual printed size of the advertisement in the publication after receiving bill.

27. SUPPLY OF NEWSPAPERS/PUBLICATIONS TO CLIENT DEPARTMENTS:

Every newspaper and publication will be obliged to submit one copy each of the newspaper carrying the advertisement to the client Department/Agency of government at the address mentioned in the Release Order and also to Director, failing which payment for the advertisement will not be considered. In addition, Director may ask for regular supply of specimen copies of any empanelled publication.

28. DATE OF PUBLICATION OF ADVERTISEMENT:

The newspaper will be obliged to strictly adhere to the date of publication of advertisements as given in the Release Order. Publication of advertisement on dates other than that given in the release Order, will not be paid. Any change in date of publication may be made only with the prior approval of the Director. A Newspaper/Publication must inform the Director within 24 hours, if it is unable to publish the advertisement on the due date, failing which its empanelment/registration may be suspended.

29. SELECTION OF NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

When a requisition for release of advertisements is received from the client Department/Agency of government, Director will prepare a suitable media plan keeping in view the content, the target audience of the advertisement, availability of funds and the recommendations of the Department/Agency of Government and all Departments have to adhere to this media plan.

30. RELEASE OF ADVERTISEMENTS TO PERIODICALS:

The Director would release advertisements for any regular issue or in exceptional circumstances in the special supplement brought out by any newspaper, periodical or magazine on BOC/DPR rates, which will be based on the circulation of any publication. The Director, keeping in view the publicity impact, may also release advertisements on Commercial Card/Offered Rates/DPR Rates for any special occasion in regular issue or special supplements brought out by any publication/newspaper even if it is not registered.

31. TRADE DISCOUNT ON ADVERTISEMENTS:

A trade discount @15% would be applicable to all Category advertisements released by Director to all publications. 15% discount would be taken from all the newspapers/publications on BOC/DPR rates by all the Departments/Govt. agencies in case bill is raised directly to them by the newspapers against classified advertisements.

32. GUIDELINES FOR ADVERTISEMENT CONTENT:

1. The Director while acting as the nodal agency for releasing advertisements, would not only perform professional work such as designing, selection of Newspapers/Periodicals, space booking and placement of advertisement etc., but its decision regarding release of such advertisement to any Newspaper/Periodical would also be final.
2. The Departments/Agencies should send its request at least four working days in advance and in emergent cases, one working day in advance to the Director.
3. The content and design of any advertisement would be the exclusive concern of the Client. However,

Director may redesign and rephrase the contents to improve or appropriately convey the message and objective of the advertisement.

4. The Director may on its own or on the request of Departments/Agencies release display advertisements on various important occasions such as Independence Day, Republic Day, Death or Birth Anniversary of prominent National and State Leaders, Festivals and other important occasions/events and on the Policies, Programmes and achievements of the State Government/Agencies.
5. Advertisements may be released in furtherance of various publicity campaigns launched in the State from time to time.
6. Advertisements may also be released on other important occasions like inaugurations or foundation stone laying ceremonies of various projects and such important occasion/events as the Government may decide to publicise.
7. Advertisements may also carry the appeal/message of the President of India, Prime Minister, Governor, Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, Minister or any other dignitary holding any Government office or persons relevant to the occasion. The relevant persons may be the person who has been invited to preside over the function, inaugurate the function/project or to lay the foundation stone of the project or important persons in honour of whom the function/project has been organised.
8. Display advertisements, which in one way or the other, highlight programmes, policies, vision and achievements of the State, the visuals or photographs of any appropriate/relevant National/State leader or any other prominent personality, whose ideals and life-sketch suits the occasion, may also be used. The prominent personality here may be any role model in public life. The basic objective of using the photographs/sketch or symbol of any such prominent personality would be to give effect and wider acceptability to the message carried through these advertisements.
9. Display advertisement may be issued to generate a feeling of participation in the democratic process amongst all sections of the society, motivate and inspire the younger generation and make them feel proud of the history of the country, our leaders/trendsetters and to cherish the ideals set forth by them.
10. Campaigns must be designed to create awareness among the people about various policies, programmes and achievements of the State Government. Through such advertisements, the State Government communicates with its citizens and it plays an integral part in dissemination of information, which is essential in a democracy.
11. All campaigns should be relevant to Government responsibilities.
12. Campaign materials should be presented in an objective, fair and accessible manner and be designed to meet the objectives of the campaign.
13. Campaign material should be objective and not directed at promoting any political interest.
14. Campaigns should be justified and undertaken in an efficient, effective and relevant manner.
15. Campaigns must comply with legal requirements, procurement policies and procedures.

33. **AUTHORITY:** Government may authorise any officer of the Department of Information and Public Relations to carry out any functions of the Director under this policy.

34. **EXEMPTIONS:** The Municipal Councils (excluding Municipal Corporation) are exempted from releasing their advertisements through Director to the tune of Rs.50,000 (Rs. Fifty Thousand only) per advertisement, provided they obtain NOC from the Director, prior to release.

Government may exempt any agency from the requirement of prior approval of advertisement by Director

and release advertisements through Director from time to time, subject to conditions and limitations as it may specify.

35. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Government agencies will follow the Advertisement Policy/Norms as laid down by the State Government, from time to time. Efforts should be made to adhere to the overall media strategy of the Department to ensure maximum coverage at optimum cost. However, in specific cases where the Director wishes to make a deviation from these norms, full and detailed justification should be given while placing the order on case to case basis. Any issue which is not covered in the Advertisement Policy would be taken up separately with approval of the competent authority.

Sd/-

RAMVIR, IAS

Secretary to Government of Punjab,

Department of Information & Public Relations.

Chandigarh

The 12th January, 2026

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